

# PRINCIPALS' DIGESTS

30 Palliser Drive • Hamilton • NZ 3210 • Tel 07 855 7101 • digests @xtra.co.nz

Digests may be copied and distributed in the school community of the subscriber.

Newsletter

Volume 16 Number 31

## Reading checklists

### Pre-school

#### *My child:*

- listens carefully to books read aloud.
- knows the shapes and names for the letters of the alphabet and can write many letters.
- knows that spoken words are made of separate sounds.
- recognises and makes rhymes and can tell when words begin with the same sound.
- knows that the order of letters in a written word stands for the order of sounds in a spoken word.
- knows some common words such as a, the, I, and you, on sight.
- knows how to hold a book, and follows print from left to right and from top to bottom of a page when read to.
- asks and answers questions about stories and uses what is already known to understand a story.
- knows the parts of a book and understands that authors write words and illustrators create pictures.
- knows that in most books the main message is in the print, not the pictures.
- predicts what will happen in a story and retells or acts out stories.
- knows the difference between 'made up' fiction and 'real' non-fiction books and the difference between stories and poems.
- writes some letters and words as they are said aloud and begins to spell some words correctly.
- writes his/her own first and last name and the first names of some friends and family.
- knows words that are important to school work, such as the names for colours, shapes, and numbers.
- knows words from daily life, such as street names and the names for people in the community like shopkeepers.

### First years

#### *My child:*

- knows all the letters of the alphabet.
- knows the difference between letters and words, and knows there are spaces between words in print.
- knows some punctuation marks and where sentences and paragraphs begin and end.
- can put together and break apart the sounds of most one-syllable words and can count the number of syllables in a word.
- can sound out words s/he doesn't know, and recognise some irregularly spelled words, such as have, said, you, and are.
- reads books aloud, and can tell when s/he cannot understand what s/he is reading.
- reads and understands simple written instructions.
- predicts what will happen next in a story
- asks questions (how, why, what if?) about books s/he is reading and can describe what s/he has learned from a book.
- uses invented spelling in writing and also understands that there is a correct way to spell words.
- uses simple punctuation marks and capital letters.
- writes for different purposes - stories, explanations, lists, letters - and reads and revises writing.
- speaks in complete sentences, and uses more formal language at school than at home and with friends.
- is curious about words and uses new words when s/he speaks and writes.
- is beginning to see that some words mean the same thing (synonyms) and some mean the opposite (antonyms).



## Second years

### **My child:**

- reads and understands second grade fiction and non-fiction, and compares and connects information from different sources.
- reads for specific purposes and specific questions, and explores topics of interest on his/her own.
- answers 'how', 'why', and 'what-if' questions, and recalls information, main ideas, and details after reading.
- interprets information from diagrams, charts, and graphs.
- takes part in creative responses to stories, such as dramatisations and oral presentations.
- pays attention to how words are spelled and correctly spells words s/he has studied.
- spells a word the way it sounds if s/he doesn't know its spelling.
- writes for many different purposes and writes different types of compositions (for example, stories, reports, and letters).
- makes thoughtful choices about what to include in their writing.
- takes part in writing conferences, revises and edits what s/he has written, and attends to the mechanics of writing (spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation) in final versions.
- learns new words and shares them at school and at home.
- uses clues from the context and their knowledge of word parts (roots, prefixes, suffixes) to figure out what words mean.
- is increasing their vocabulary with synonyms and antonyms.
- uses parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) correctly.
- learns new words through independent reading.

## Third years

### **My child:**

- uses what s/he knows of phonics and word parts (prefixes, roots, suffixes) to sound out unfamiliar words.
- reads third year level texts (stories, non-fiction, magazine articles, computer screens) with fluency and comprehension.
- explores topics of interest and reads longer stories and chapter books independently.
- can explain the major points in fiction and non-fiction books.
- identifies and discusses words or phrases s/he does not understand.
- asks questions and discusses the themes or messages of stories.
- uses information s/he has gathered and his/her own reasoning to judge explanations and opinions and distinguishes cause from effect, fact from opinion, and main ideas from supporting details.
- understands and reads graphs and charts.
- uses context to gain meaning from what s/he reads.
- correctly spells words s/he has studied.
- gathers information from a variety of sources, including books, articles, and computers, and uses it in his/her writing.
- reviews his/her own written work for errors and works with teachers and classmates to edit and revise.
- is starting to use metaphors and other literary forms.
- discusses writing with other children and responds helpfully to their writing.
- develops vocabulary and knowledge through independent reading.
- builds vocabulary through synonyms and antonyms.
- uses parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) correctly.

Acknowledgement: Adapted from *A Child Becomes a Reader--Birth Through Preschool*. This publication was produced under National Institute for Literacy Contract No. ED-00CO-0093.